

Transportation Programs and Projects for the Omni & Performing Arts Center Areas

I-395 Alternatives Review Study

*Status Report
March 2003*

Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Miami Urbanized Area



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***Prepared by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in
coordination with:***

- ***City of Miami***
- ***Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)***
- ***Performing Arts Center (PAC)***
- ***Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and***
- ***Miami-Dade County Public Works Department***

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Under MPO Resolution #33-02, the I-395 Committee was created on September 26, 2002. The purpose of this committee is to reach a consensus on a highway improvement alternative that will address needed traffic solutions along the I-395 corridor and also in the vicinity of the Omni Area. At the request of a member of the I-395 Committee, the third meeting was fully dedicated to discuss short term projects considered for the study area. The meeting was held on March 5, 2003, and several public entities made presentations regarding projects under their jurisdiction that could be completed within the next few years. These presentations were conducted by:

1. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
2. Performing Arts Center of Greater Miami
3. Miami-Dade Public Works Department
4. City of Miami

Additionally, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Miami Urbanized Area has been conducting studies within the downtown area that are also included in this document. This report summarized the short term studies and projects presented at the meeting.

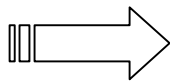
The I-395 Committee is composed by:

MPO Board Member Barbara Carey-Schuler, Chairperson
Mayor Manny Diaz, Co-Chair
MPO Board Member Bruno Barreiro
MPO Board Member Ronald Krongold
Jorge Espinel
Jorge Roviroso
William L. Senn
Hal Spaet
Parker Thomson
Charles Towsley

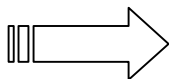
Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)

Metric Engineering, Inc. made a presentation on behalf of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). This presentation included proposed improvements within the vicinity of the Performing Arts Center (PAC) and the Omni areas. These improvements are:

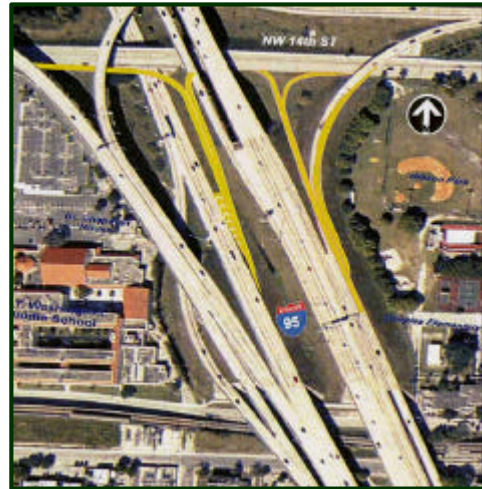
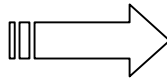
1. Conversion of the NE 1st and NE 2nd Avenues from one-way to two-way circulation traffic between NE 11th Street and NE 14th Street. This action will improve the circulation within the area.



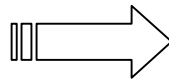
2. FDOT is proposing to improve the aesthetics of the area by providing landscaping in the neighborhood of the Performing Arts Center (PAC), as shown in the sketch.



3. A southbound access ramps are proposed from NW 14th Street to the I-95. This improvement will provide access from and to I-95 to 14th street only in the southbound direction of I-95.



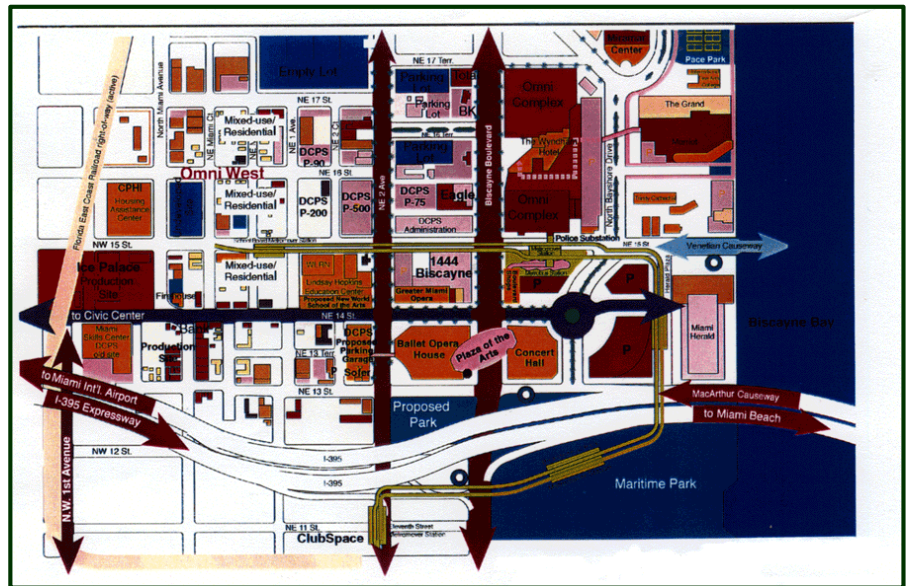
4. NW 3rd Avenue hook ramp to I-395 northbound ramp.



Performing Arts Center (PAC)

Ms. Gail Thompson, Director for the Performing Arts Center, made a brief presentation about the status of the project. Mr. Mike Hardy provided additional details about the construction of the project. The PAC is scheduled to be open to the public in 2005.

Schematic map with future developments in the neighborhood of the PAC.



Outside view of the future PAC.

The 570,000 square foot facility is scheduled to open in 2005 and will include a 2,200-seat Concert Hall, the 2,480-seat Ziff Ballet Opera House, 200-seat Studio Theatre, the Plaza of the Arts, educational and ancillary support spaces and a cafe.

The PAC will be centrally located in the Arts, Media & Entertainment District, formerly known as the Omni District, of downtown Miami and will be situated on 5.9 acres of land. Biscayne Boulevard will intersect the two major performance halls, with the Ziff Ballet Opera House situated on the west side and the Concert Hall to the east. The Plaza of the Arts and an elevated pedestrian bridge, spanning Biscayne Boulevard, will connect the two main buildings.

Additionally, the PAC complex also include the construction of a parking garage facility, traffic improvements in the roadways around the PAC, a passive park close to the existing and appropriate signage within the neighborhood.



Views of the different buildings included as part of the PAC complex during construction.

Regarding the impact of the proposed improvements for the I-395 corridor, no major problems were reported to the Committee.

The following pictures show an artistic representation of the future facility.



The pictures and information shown in this document were taken from the PAC and the PAC Foundation Websites, respectively.

Miami-Dade County Public Works Department

The Department of Public Works is working is upgrading the Venetian Toll Plaza. Additionally, the Department is working in several projects to improve pedestrian facilities within the area. No major projects are programmed in the short term for the area.



Following is a list of studies and projects under the jurisdiction of the City of Miami that may impact the study area:

A. Current/Ongoing Studies

1. Downtown Transportation Master Plan (DTMP)
 - a. See MPO Section for details
2. "Baylink"
 - a. See MPO Section for details
3. DuPont Plaza Traffic Flow Revision PD&E and I-95 Distributor Ramps Reconstruction Study
 - a. Study approximately 30% complete.
4. Transportation Element of Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan (MCNP)
 - a. Comprehensive amendment adopted by City Commission 2/27/03
5. Downtown Development of Regional Impact (DRI) Increment II
 - a. Completed
6. S.W. 7/8 Sts. I-95 to S.W. 27 Ave. two-way conversion economic impact study
 - a. Study completed
 - b. Additional traffic analysis being negotiated
7. Brickell Area/CBD South Traffic Congestion Mitigation Area Studies
 - a. Several technical studies in budget for 2002-03
8. Coral Way Resurfacing, Restoration and Rehabilitation (RR&R) Five Points to Brickell Avenue
 - a. Preliminary planning underway



B. Current/Ongoing Projects

1. Grand Avenue Reconstruction
 - a. Nearing construction
2. S.W. 27 Avenue Reconstruction, Coconut Grove
 - a. Preliminary designs completed
 - b. Awaiting funding for right-of-way acquisition
3. NW 5th Street Bridge Reconstruction
 - a. Final design concept nearing selection
4. S.E. 8 St. Brickell to S. Miami Avenue
 - a. Agreement reached to allow FDOT to accept right-of-way
 - b. Final design and construction to follow immediately



5. Port of Miami Interim Truck Access Plan
 - a. Consultants are completing final design
6. Coral Way RR&R Five Points to Douglas Road
 - a. Roadway work completed
 - b. Median and side improvements underway
7. I-95 Improvements
 - a. I-95 to Biscayne Bay includes the NE 36th Street Reconstruction and the N. Miami Avenue Off-Ramp Access into the Miami Design District
 - b. Programmed for completion in 2004
8. Biscayne Boulevard Reconstruction Projects
 - a. N.E. 5 Street to I-395 nearing final choice of concept
 - b. Final design to follow immediately
9. S.W. 2 Avenue Bridge Replacement
 - a. On schedule for completion late 2003
 - b. Study approximately 30% complete.
10. Transportation Element of Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan (MCNP)
 - a. Comprehensive amendment adopted by City Commission 2/27/03
11. Downtown Development of Regional Impact (DRI) Increment II
 - a. Completed
12. S.W. 7/8 Sts. I-95 to S.W. 27 Ave. two-way conversion economic impact study
 - a. Study completed
 - b. Additional traffic analysis being negotiated
13. Brickell Area/CBD South Traffic Congestion Mitigation Area Studies
 - a. Several technical studies in budget for 2002-03
14. Coral Way Resurfacing, Restoration and Rehabilitation (RR&R) Five Points to Brickell Avenue
 - a. Preliminary planning underway



C. Projects Under Consideration Outside Downtown Area:

1. Streetcar/light rail line from Government Center/Overtown Metrorail stations northeast through Design District, Little Haiti, and the Upper Eastside within the City of Miami, and extending on through the cities of El Portal, Miami Shores, North Miami, North Miami Beach, to Aventura.
2. Commuter rail line along FEC right-of-way to Downtown Miami from the northeast suburbs.
3. S.W. 8 Street/Calle Ocho traffic redirection and Urban Street Improvement Project from I-95 to S.W. 27 Avenue, including acquisition and development of off-street parking facilities.
4. Coral Way Urban Street Improvement Project from S.W. 12th Avenue to Brickell Avenue.



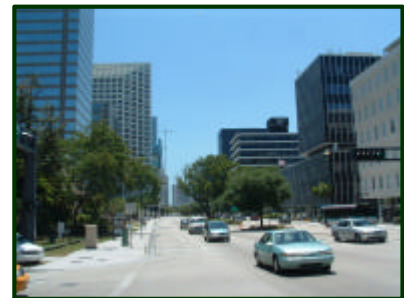
5. N.E. 62 Street Urban Street Improvement Project through new Little Haiti Park.
6. W. Flagler Street beautification project from Miami River to West City Limit.
7. N.W. 79 Street traffic redirection project.
8. N.W. 37 Ave. Landscaping/Beautification project.
9. Miami River Greenway Roadway Improvement Projects from Biscayne Bay to City Limits.
10. Neighborhood Bus Circulator Systems – Various locations in Miami’s neighborhoods.
11. A two-way street conversion project to eliminate most of the existing one-way streets throughout the city, commencing in Downtown.



D. Brickell Area Traffic Congestion Mitigation District - Project Status Report

1. Two-Way Conversion – SW 8 Street

The SW 8 Street is presently one-way eastbound from I-95 to Brickell Avenue. It is “paired” with S.W. 7 Street, which is one-way westbound. East of Brickell Avenue, S.W. 8 Street is two-way, serving Brickell Key. The one-way pattern also restricts access to businesses along SW 8 Street. Phases considered in this project:



- a. Brickell Avenue to Miami Avenue (Full implementation requires approval by Florida Department of Transportation, Miami-Dade County, or both)
 - An interim plan to relieve the Brickell Key situation is now being implemented by the City and FDOT. It will convert SW 8 Street to two-way operation for the single block between Brickell Avenue and Miami Avenue, allowing a 1-lane westbound movement on SW 8 Street from Brickell Avenue to Miami Avenue, where it can turn north to the Miami Avenue Bridge, or to SW 7 Street, where it can then go west to I-95.
 - This interim plan requires advance dedication of the zoned right-of-way along the north side of SW 8 Street between the Metromover and Miami Avenues. The dedication documents and deed are being prepared at the present time.
 - This plan will also require signalization, signage, pavement and curb changes to accomplish, and can be done within a year after right-of-way is secured.
 - Modification of signal timing to synchronize with Brickell Bridge openings has been accomplished; video surveillance for real-time adjustments is under consideration, and an alternative routes plan has been prepared and distributed by the Police Department.
 - Modification of signal timing to allow more “green time” to exit Brickell Key has been implemented. The change results in longer queues on northbound Brickell, but within acceptable limits considering the relief granted to Brickell Key traffic.

- Regulation of construction permits, hours of operation, and requirements for off-site parking for construction workers is being considered.
- b. Brickell Avenue to I-95 (Full implementation requires approval by Florida Department of Transportation, Miami-Dade County, or both)
- A study has been completed showing that converting SW 8 Street to two-way operation would facilitate traffic movement, increase access to adjoining businesses, improve access to I-95 and the Miami Avenue Bridge, and free the Brickell Key exiting movement.
 - The p.m. “rush hour” traffic would gain two westbound lanes to I-95, facilitating this movement.
 - To achieve this conversion, a Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) study needs to be performed. Following its completion, the project can be designed and let for construction by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).



- c. I-95 to SW 27 Avenue (Full implementation requires approval by Florida Department of Transportation, Miami-Dade County, or both)
- SW 8 Street is one-way eastbound over the entire distance from SW 27 Avenue to I-95.
 - Dedicating three lanes of the street to traffic, and allowing for parallel parking on each side (essential due to the high-density urban character of the business area) reduces sidewalk width below the minimum desirable for pedestrian movement.
 - A study to analyze conversion of SW 8 Street to two-way traffic, increasing the width of sidewalks and providing for beautification of the roadway, has been completed, and is under review by the City and FDOT. Because SW 8 Street is a State highway, FDOT approval will be required for any changes that are recommended.
 - If it is not feasible to effect the two-way conversion at this time, an alternative presented by the study is reversing the flow of SW 8 Street to westbound one-way operation, to improve access to businesses during the afternoon homeward-bound trip.

2. Two-way Miami Avenue, both sides of Miami Avenue Bridge

The Miami Avenue Bridge is underutilized, while Brickell and SW 2 Avenue bridges (currently being replaced) are heavily used.



3. Miami Avenue North of River (Full implementation requires approval by Florida Department of Transportation, Miami-Dade County, or both)

City of Miami has requested that the Miami-Dade County Public Works Department (MDPW) consider making Miami Avenue two-way northbound to S. 1 Street, so (1) a left-turn can be made at S. 3 Street and (2) traffic can access I-95 at S. 2 Street.

4. Miami Avenue South of River (Full implementation requires approval by Florida Department of Transportation, Miami-Dade County, or both)

Following conversion of the northbound movement, the City will request a similar action for the southbound Miami Avenue traffic, so that properties fronting on Miami Avenue will have the benefit of two-way access.

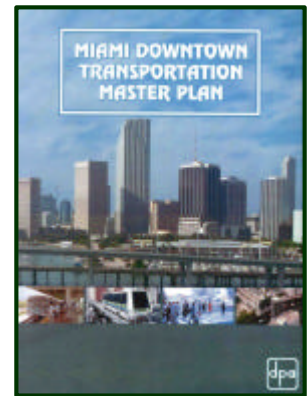
5. Downtown Transportation Master Plan (DTMP) (Full implementation requires approval by Florida Department of Transportation, Miami-Dade County, or both)
 - a. Study commenced early 2001; final report now ready for City Commission consideration.
 - b. A major feature of the DTMP is a sophisticated computer model that can depict existing and future traffic conditions under varying developmental assumptions and scenarios, and can be continually updated as conditions change.
 - c. Newest and most intensive downtown redevelopment is happening in Brickell.
 - d. Recommendations in DTMP will require many years for full implementation, but many can be implemented in the near-term.
6. DuPont Plaza Two-Way Conversion (Full implementation requires approval by Florida Department of Transportation, Miami-Dade County, or both)
 - a. The traffic circulation system now used in the DuPont Plaza area forces all traffic destined for I-95 or Brickell Avenue to pass through the intersection of NE 2nd Avenue and NE 2nd Street, creating a bottleneck that causes queuing for many blocks in both directions when the Brickell Bridge opens.
 - b. An application for funding under the Transportation Outreach Program (TOPS) was filed November 7, 2000, and was awarded \$480,000 for FY '01-'02 to prepare the Project Development & Environment (PD&E) study to recommend a solution to the traffic circulation problem.
 - c. An additional \$1.3 million funding from TOPS has been authorized for FY '02-'03 for project design that will be based on the alternative selected in the PD&E. Subsequent funding of is yet to be secured for construction of the preferred alternative.
7. Tunnel Under Miami River at S.W. 1st Avenue (Full implementation requires approval by Florida Department of Transportation, Miami-Dade County, or both)
 - a. Project has been included in 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan.
 - b. Project is funded for \$250 million in the Peoples Transportation Plan, endorsed by Miami-Dade voters November 5, 2002.
 - c. PD&E to be initiated 2003 as part of Brickell Traffic Congestion Mitigation District (TCMD) plan.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Currently, the MPO is conducting two studies that may impact the Omni and Performing Arts Center areas:

1. Downtown Master Plan

In coordination with the City of Miami and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the consultant firm of David Plummer & Associates is in the final phase for completing this study. The proposed improvements recommended in this study are still under consideration and have not been approved by the City or the County. However, the attached exhibits show all the recommended projects for the whole area:



- a. Brickell Area Improvements – Map
- b. Brickell Area Improvements – List of Projects
- c. CBD Area Improvements – Map
- d. CBD Area Improvements – List of Projects
- e. Omni/Overtown/Park West Area Improvements – Map
- f. Omni/Overtown/Park West Area Improvements – List of Projects

2. Baylink Study



The purpose of this study is to evaluate the feasibility of connecting downtown Miami and the South Beach area with a rail system. The tentative alignment will go from Government Center/Overtown through Miami's Downtown to Miami Beach and its Convention Center. The City of Miami Beach is in the process of evaluating the alternatives for selecting their local preferred alternative. The City of Miami already agreed with the study recommendations.

Exhibit 1- Brickell Area Improvements

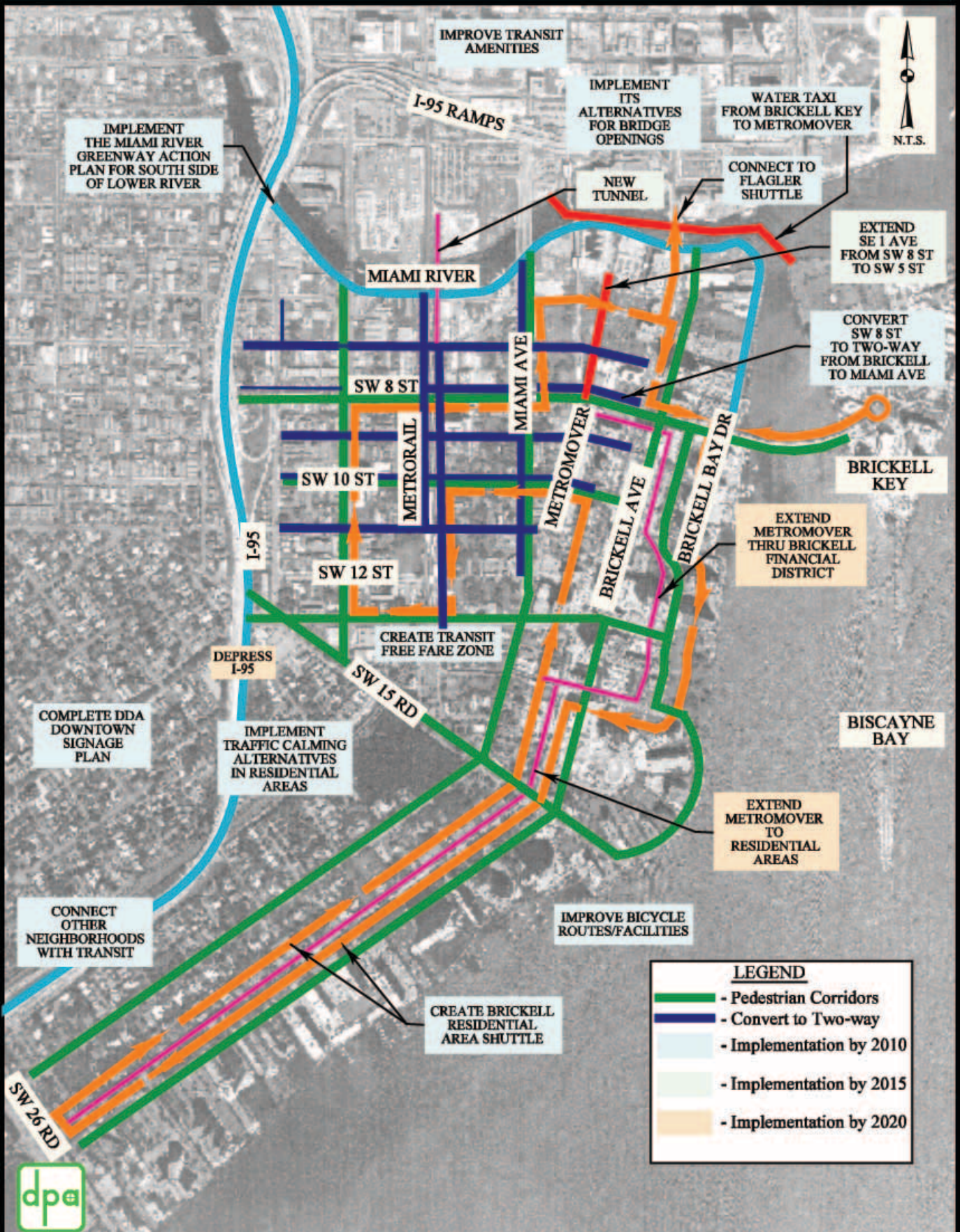
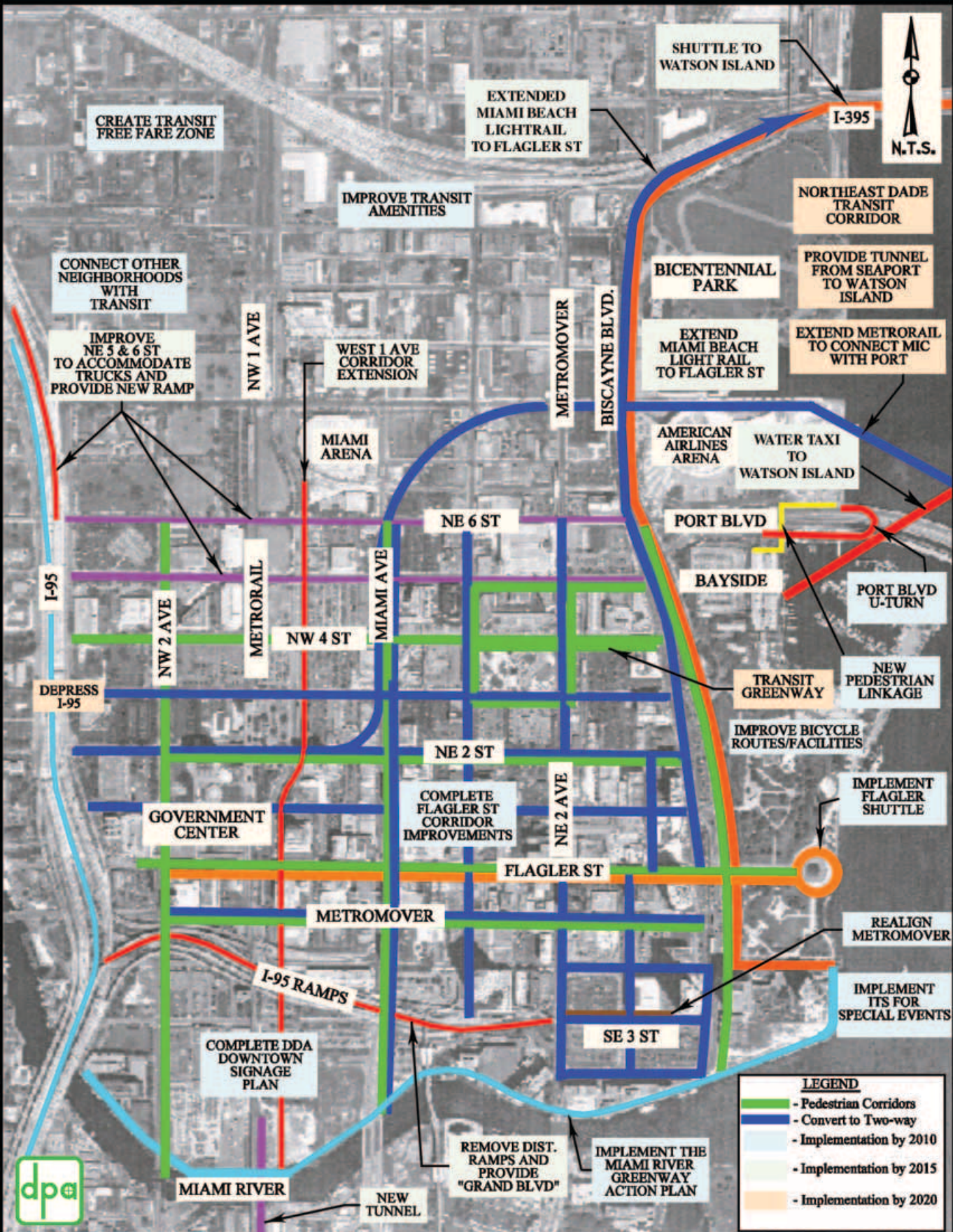


Exhibit 2- Brickell Area Improvements

<u>Recommended Improvement</u>	<u>Phase</u>
Create a Transit Free-Fare Zone	1
Implement Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) alternatives to help with bridge openings	1
Improve transit amenities	1
Connect Brickell to other neighborhoods with transit	1
Develop pedestrian corridors	1
Implement Miami River Greenway Action Plan for the south side of the Miami River	1
Convert one-way streets to two-way streets	1
Connect Brickell Shuttle to Flagler Shuttle	1
Construct a new tunnel under the Miami River at SW 1 Avenue	2
Extend SE 1 Avenue from SE 8 Street to SE 5 Street	2
Complete Downtown DDA Downtown signage plan	1
Loop Metromover through the Brickell Financial District	3
Improve bicycle routes/facilities	1
Provide shuttle system for the Brickell residential areas	1
Implement traffic calming alternatives through Brickell residential areas	1
Extend the Metromover to SE 26 Road	3
Provide a water taxi from Brickell Key to the Riverwalk Metromover station	1
Depress I-95 and create a Grand Boulevard	3

Note: Phase 1: Implementation by 2010, Phase 2: Implementation by 2015, Phase 3: Implementation by 2020

Exhibit 3- CBD Area Improvements



Miami Downtown Transportation Master Plan

Exhibit 4- CBD Area Improvements

<u>Recommended Improvement</u>	<u>Phase</u>
Create a Transit Free-Fare Zone	1
Provide pedestrian connections from Bayside to AA Arena	1
Extend Miami Beach light rail (Baylink) into downtown	2
Convert one-way streets to two-way streets	1
Improve transit amenities	1
Connect CBD to other neighborhoods with transit	1
Complete the Flagler Street Corridor improvements	1
Develop pedestrian corridors	1
Implement Miami River Greenway Action Plan for the north side of the Miami River	1
Re-align Metromover and add new station at DuPont Plaza area	1
Implement Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) for special events	1
Complete Biscayne Boulevard improvements	1
Construct a new tunnel under the Miami River at SW 1 Avenue	2
Complete DDA Downtown signage plan	1
Extend W 1 Avenue Corridor (Arena Boulevard)	2
Improve bicycle routes/facilities	1
Extend fixed guideway to AA Arena and Seaport	3
Remove Distributor Ramps and provide a Grand Boulevard on S 3 St	2
Implement Flagler Shuttle	1
Provide Port Boulevard U-turn	1
Implement shuttle system from Watson Island	1
Provide a Transit Greenway	3
Provide a I-95 NB on-ramp at NW 6 St to provide access to WB SR 836 & Improve N 5 & 6 Streets for truck traffic	2
Provide Commuter Rail to Broward County	3
Provide a water taxi from Watson Island	1
Depress I-95 and create a Grand Boulevard	3

Note: Phase 1: Implementation by 2010, Phase 2: Implementation by 2015, Phase 3: Implementation by 2020

Exhibit 5-Omni/Overtown/Park West Area Improvements

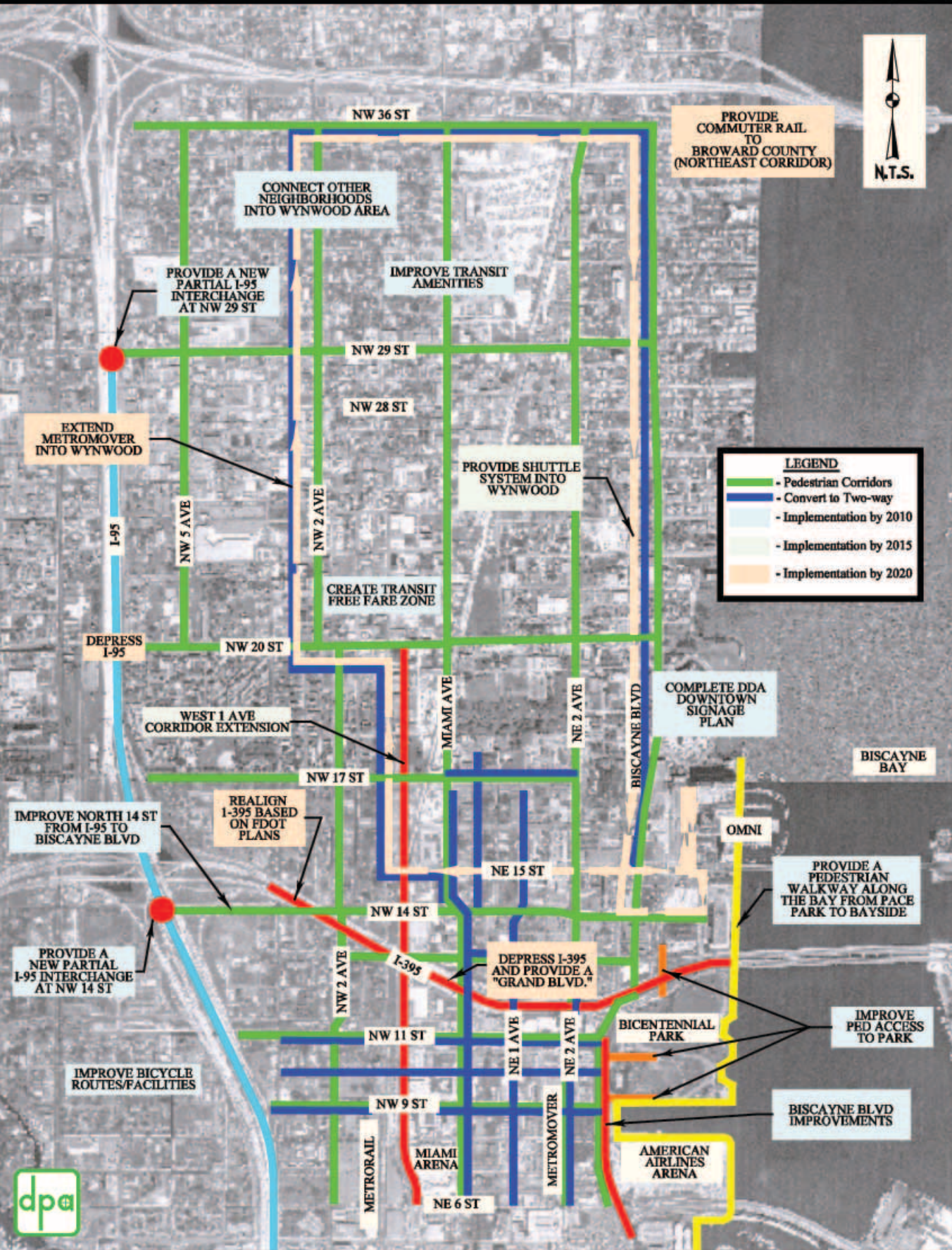


Exhibit 6- Omni/Overtown/Park West Area Improvements

<u>Recommended Improvement</u>	<u>Phase</u>
Create a Transit Free-Fare Zone	1
Extend Miami Beach light rail (Baylink)	2
Connect O/OT/PW with other neighborhoods with transit	1
Develop pedestrian corridors	1
Convert one-way streets to two-way streets	1
Implement Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) for special events	1
Provide a pedestrian walkway along the Bay from Pace Park to Bayside	1
Complete Biscayne Boulevard improvements	1
Improve pedestrian connections to Bicentennial Park	1
Provide tunnel from Seaport to Watson Island	3
Extend W 1 Avenue Corridor Extension	2
Implement DDA Downtown signage plan	1
Improve bicycle routes/ facilities	1
Provide a shuttle system into Wynwood	1
Depress I-395 to provide Grand Boulevard	3
Extend Metromover into Wynwood	3
Improve N 14 St from I-95 to Biscayne Blvd	1
Provide Commuter Rail to Broward County	3
Provide a new partial I-95 Interchange at NW 29 St	1
Provide a new I-95/NW 14 St Interchange	2
Depress I-95 and create a Grand Boulevard	3

Note: Phase 1: Implementation by 2010, Phase 2: Implementation by 2015, Phase 3: Implementation by 2020

